



United Nations Symposium on Population and Housing Censuses

13-14 September 2004, New York

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Statistics Division, Demographic and Social Statistics Branch

Purpose

The purpose of this Symposium is to set priorities for the upcoming decade round of population and housing censuses in light of the experience from the previous census decade. Specifically the Symposium will provide inputs for the drafting of a resolution requested by the Statistical Commission at its 35th session, calling on the Secretary-General to proceed with the development of a 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme.¹

Sessions

1. Experiences and lessons learned from the 2000 census decade: Why have some countries carried out a census during the 2000 round, while others have not? How well have censuses been able to meet government demands for data on critical issues such as shifts in population structure and size, the movement of persons across borders, the international threat of HIV/AIDS and poverty? To what extent are censuses meeting reporting requirements of the Millennium Development Goals and international conferences?
2. Critical issues to be addressed: How are countries addressing public concerns about loss of privacy and misuse of data, as well as government concerns about high costs and lack of public support for census operations? What are some of the strategies that have been tried for maximizing utilization of census data while maintaining confidentiality? To what extent are countries considering alternative approaches to traditional censuses? Under what conditions are they seeking these alternatives? What are the perceived benefits?
3. Implications for the 2010 Programme: What do the above imply for the preparation of a 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme? How should these considerations be reflected in the draft resolution? What role should the United Nations play in the implementation of the programme?

Format of the Symposium

The meeting will focus on issues and challenges that have emerged during the last census decade (1995-2004) and seek ways to guide census planning for the next census decade (2005-2014). A key paper will be presented for each session. The recommendations of the Symposium and the draft resolution will be submitted for consideration to the 36th session of the Statistical Commission.



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¹ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2004, Supplement No. 4 (E/2004/24), chap. II, B, para. 2 (a).